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PRIESTS AND WOMEN'S CLOTHES.

BY CESARE LOMBROSO.

WOMAN among savage peoples, as was the case with the ancients, is held, with but few exceptions (which shall be explained below), in great contempt and, in several cases, even in horror. Among the Dyaks of Northwest Borneo, young men are prohibited from eating game—which is especially meant as food for women and old men—for fear of rendering them deer-hearted. Boys of the Wiraijuri tribe must not play with girls; and should any one of the Imahas do so, he would be scoffed at. Among the Samoyeds, the Astyaks and other Shamanistic populations, woman is regarded as contaminated, so much so that men avoid touching anything belonging to her. Women, therefore, have got their own crockery and utensils and cannot go beyond the corner of the tent allotted to them. They are not allowed to walk where men resort to, nor even are they permitted to approach the fire. Should a man be compelled to make use of a woman's utensil, he will take good care to free himself from impurity by fumigation. Likewise, when a woman has given the pitch to the tent, she must first fumigate it before man vouchsafes to make his entrance. In the South Sea Islands no woman is permitted to tamper with the food set apart for men or kept in store for the gods.

Among some Brazilian tribes it is believed that the presence of woman will hinder wine from fermenting. In Nukahiva should a woman happen to touch or sit near an object put under taboo, and rendered sacred and inviolable because of its contact with man, it cannot be further made use of, and she has to pay the penalty with her life in consequence. In Tahiti women must respect the places resorted to by men, as well as their fishing-tackle and weapons.

The head of the husband or father is considered defiled by contact with a woman, nor is it lawful for a wife or sister to meddle with any object or implement tabooed by a chief. The Burmese consider it disreputable to have a woman living overhead, and to avoid such a disgrace they build only one-storied houses. The walls of the Maoris' dwellings are tabooed; no man will lean against them. Amongst the Kaffas of East Africa the woman is locked up within the interior part of the building, her husband occupying the remainder. She is strictly prohibited from going out-of-doors, every infringement being liable to three years' imprisonment. A Bakari woman, on being asked her name, only answered, "I am a woman." None of the Samoyedean, Corean or Abipone womankind is endowed with a name. Such was the case also with the ancient Romans. These instances can as well be compared with those which exclude women from possessing a soul.

Woman is, consequently, often tabooed admittance into the temples, as is the case with the Arabs of Mecca. According to several theologians, woman has no room whatever in Paradise. The same opinion is prevalent among the Hawaiians. Should a Hindoo woman touch an image, the validity of its divinity being thereby destroyed, it is cast away as unfit for further use. Amongst the Fiji Islanders dogs are excluded from some temples. Women are, however, debarred from all. In the Marquesas Islands, should a woman venture to enter a temple while divine service is being held, or even walk under the shadow of its trees, she would be forthwith put to death. Exclusion of the fair sex extends even to dancing-parties, festivals, entertainments and banquets. In many cases only folks of one sex make up a dance, the intrusion of the other being punishable with death. This separation of the two sexes is adhered to by Greenlanders, even in funeral ceremonies.

Sovereign, though unjust, contempt for woman being so manifest among savage peoples, it yet seems strange that it is just among the savages and the ancients that priests should have adopted the apparel, ornaments and even the very deportment of women. With the Teadykes, for instance, some priests claim to be considered as being women, or rather, they dress like women and exact a woman's treatment. There are men amongst the

Kodyaks who bedeck themselves in female attire and are regarded as warlocks.

The Persians wore a tiara as a head-dress, which bore a kind of mask or double veil hanging down the lower part of the face, so that the breath might not sully the sacred vestments. No one is a stranger to the fact that almost throughout the East, in the Fiji and Sidi Islands, women cover their faces with veils, just as Assyrian ladies wore the tiara. Jewesses wear a kind of tiara-fashioned cap, or mitre ornamented with gold, and often surmounted by a veil. They are besides attired in wide breeches and double frocks.* The Phrygians worshipped the goddess Cybele Berecynthia, who appears to correspond to Terra or the Earth. The ears of corn and the keys were her symbols and badges, intimating the fecundity of the earth and the opening up of her treasures. Her priests were called Corybantes, Curetes and also Galli, from the River Gallus crossing Phrygia. During the festivals of Cybele they danced around the goddess's statue, and with unsheathed swords they either slashed or scourged themselves, filling the air with dreadful shrieks, howlings and shrill songs.

These Galli were a kind of quacks, who, as Plutarch states, sold their oracles to gabby women. They were often accompanied by old sorceresses who cast charms, mumbling verses all along. The Egyptian priests were shaved neck and crop, and, like women, wore pearl laces or rings round their legs. According to Lucianus, above three hundred priests of the temple of Hieropolis, as well as the Syrian and Phœnician clergy, were dressed in variegated garments, or purple-bedizened white tunics, which were fastened round their waist with a silk or linen girdle. They were dressed just like women. They wore a Phrygian cap, buff buskins, rouged their faces and dyed their eyebrows. A particular characteristic feature is in many tribes of North America common to men in female apparel. According to Marquette, such woman-like men were regarded by the Illinois and Nadovessi as *manitu*, or holy, on account of their strange way of living. Such men are likewise met with among Northwestern Indians; but in their case, they are connected with the priesthood. In Virginia priests wore

* Whoever will compare the tiara and mitre with the coifs worn by some Norwegian and Piedmontese women cannot but be struck with their similarity, and must needs conclude that they were originally female ornaments.

a kind of plaited petticoat, which was tucked up and fastened with a clasp to their right shoulder and hung down just above the knee. Their head was closely shaved, excepting the top, which was covered with a tuft of hair, and their body was besmeared with paint.

The Patagonians have prophet priests of both sexes; the men are obliged to dress like women and observe perpetual chastity, which is not exacted from the female branch. Their vocation is signalized by periodical epileptic paroxysms.

The Christians during the first four centuries made use of no special wearing-apparel. Saint Jerome (fourth century) is the first of the Holy Fathers to make mention of any peculiar characteristic attire for celebrant ministers. On the whole, it was an imitation of the Eastern garb. The ancient priests wore a brilliant white tunic. In fact, they are represented as attired in white like women in the mosaic of Saint Ambrose. With regard to the high dignitaries of the Church, they wore, as they still do, the tiara, stole and chasuble, or *planeta*, over the alb when engaged in the celebration of the mass and the amict or amice—a kind of kerchief folded diagonally and worn about the neck and shoulders in order to protect the vestments from perspiration.

The alb, for *tunica* or *vestis alba*, is a kind of shirt reaching to the feet. It was formerly the usual vestment worn even by the laity, but afterward restricted to the clergy when engaged in religious ceremonies. In early times priests wore also pieces of cloth variegated with silk and gold embroideries on their breast, shoulders, sleeves and skirts, just as women do at present. An alb and an amice belonging to Bishop Fiorentino are still preserved in the cathedral of Viterbo.* On the former is a slip of brocade fretted with Gothic letters in bead-work. This usage lasted till A.D. 855. At present the alb is only ornamented with silk lace of different kinds and patterns according to the dignitary rank of the wearer, the same as women bedeck their chemises with. On Good Friday the alb was black.

What may be the cause of these contradictions? How can it be that woman, held as she is below beasts by man in a state of barbarity, should, at the same time, be the object of so great veneration as to be chosen as a model by the most revered members of barbarous and ancient peoples, to wit, by the priests?

* *Moroni*: "Dictionary of Historical and Ecclesiastical Lore."

It is not difficult to account for this. In the first place, priests, being conservative in their usages, adopted for their dress the reduction of what in early times had been but a mere winding-sheet, which kind of covering women also converted to use to wrap themselves up in. This style of habit was much more ancient than that of men, who, on the other hand, had adopted what is but the mere reduction of a military attire—the coat of mail—as Haeckel has well demonstrated. In the second place, when the layman adopted a reduced special military attire, just for respectability's sake, the priest did not follow suit, but externally assimilated himself to woman by adopting her garments, veils, ornaments and style of trimming the hair for no other object but that he might thus more easily take advantage of her greater liability to hysteria, hence her susceptibility to spiritual influence. He therefore claimed the province of developing the mediumistic gifts with which she might have been endowed, such as telekinetic force, telo-aesthesia, telepathy and prophecy, meaning thus to monopolize and turn them to account.

That woman is more subject to hysteria than man is a known fact, but few may know how much more liable she is to hypnotic phenomena, which easily open up the unfoldment of spiritual faculties. Pitris states that one-third of womankind and one-fifth only of hysterical men give way to the hypnotic phenomena. Out of 360 persons hypnotized by Berbillon 265 were women, fifty men and forty-five children. From a study made upon 1,700 subjects, it resulted that twelve per cent. of the women and seven per cent. of the men had veracious hallucinations. According to one authority, fifteen per cent. men and seventeen per cent. women dream very often; seven per cent. men and eight per cent. women dream all night through.

No doubt, therefore, remains that women are idiosyncratically more susceptible to hypnotic phenomena than men. And the history of observation proves that hysteria and hypnotism take the form of magic, sorcery and divination or prophecy among savage peoples.

The Kafirs of the Orange Free State believe that man's curse brings on no consequences, whereas that of woman is always baneful. "Women," say the Pishawar people, "are all witches; for several reasons they may not exert their inborn powers." So likewise women are all regarded as witches in Gangpur in Taos.

In Panagur should three or four deaths follow in succession, the village women are sure to fall under suspicion, and special means are therefore employed to hunt out the culprit. In the Slave Coast hysterical women are believed to be possessed with spirits, and such as are destined to religious offices hold full sway over their husbands, who have to serve and pay homage to them.

The Fuegians celebrate an annual festival in commemoration of man's liberation from petticoat government, for woman had got the upper hand and wielded the sceptre on account of her exclusive possession of the secrets of sorcery. Bodin calculates that witches stand in proportion to wizards as fifty to one. It is a well-known fact that the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, under the care and management of women, as well as that of Delos, of Patara or Ærsinoe, of Tenedos, and of Cyrrha, were superintended by priests. These women were convulsionaries or hysterics. The prophetic function of delivering the answers of the gods to such as came to consult the oracle was at first entrusted to young virgins consecrated to Apollo's sister, but the institution was changed when violence had been offered to one of them, and none but women above the age of fifty were permitted to enter upon that sacred office. They were called Pythiæ or Pythonesses.

The Delphian Pythia sat bare on a three-legged stool, or tripod, which stood amidst dense redolent vapors of burning aromatic herbs, issuing from the hole of a subterraneous cavity below her. She could not prophesy at will; she was consulted only one month a year. If there were no chance of getting an oracle she escaped by giving ambiguous answers. On solemn occasions the Pythia prepared herself by fasting three days and bathing in the waters of the Fountain Castalia, at the foot of Mount Parnassus, and she chewed the laurel leaves with which she crowned herself. On the appointed day Apollo manifested his presence by shaking a laurel tree that grew near the entrance. It was then that the priestess was carried on the tripod to the spot, and no sooner did she inhale the divine inspiration than her eyes suddenly sparkled, her hair stood on end, she began to foam at the mouth and a shivering ran over all her writhing body. In this convulsive state she spoke the oracle of the god, often with loud howlings and cries, and her articulations were taken down by the priests and set in order. So violent was the fit that she continued for some days in agonizing tortures, which often terminated fatally.

Even amongst the Hebrews, with whom woman was so greatly despised, we meet with prophetesses, or women held in great veneration, such as Miriam, the sister of Moses; Deborah, Huldah, and the New Testament gives us Anna and others.

Both the Gauls and the Germans believed women better fitted than men to be the recipients of the prophetic spirit. Jewish women never had any share in sacerdotal functions; so also with the Mussulman, Parsee and Buddhist women; whereas amongst the Romans and Greeks they, under the appellation of Vestales or prophetesses, presided over many religious ceremonies, some of which, such as oracles in shrines, were exclusively assigned to their office.

The Etruscan women had an ascendancy over men in religious rites, not only because of their being admitted to the sacerdotal calling, but even because of their being ordained in larger numbers than men. Bertrand rightly observes that women had an essential and prominent part in divination and magic. In fact, side by side with the wizards there were the witches; with the magicians, the Pythiæ; with the augurs, the Sibyls; with the Druids, the Druidesses; with God Faunus, fortune-teller for men; Goddess Fauna, fortune-teller for women.

Many Druidesses were believed to have magical powers superior to those of the high priests. The Druidesses could only reveal futurity, some authors state, to the man who had profaned them; others state that they were to remain in the greatest continence and see their husbands but once or twice a year. It appears that they shared sacerdotal functions with their husbands. During their consorts' absence they could act their office of offering up sacrifices to the divinity.

There existed shrines where only women were allowed to deliver oracles, such as the one at Namnetes in the Seine Island, where seven awe-inspiring virgins delivered oracles only to seamen, cured forlorn cases of disease and had a knowledge of the future.

They sometimes attended the nocturnal sacrifices stark naked, dyed black, and shaking and tossing about in frantic agitation throughout the weird ceremonies. They professionally consulted the stars to draw horoscopes, saw futurity revealed before their eyes, and drew omens by hieromancy or by the entrails of and the blood gushing from sacrificed animals. Some Druidesses of

the lowest rank gave consultations along the banks of lakes. The Germans never undertook any adventure without first consulting their prophetesses, whom they considered inspired by the gods; nor did they venture to give battle, even when placed under favorable conditions, should these privileged creatures discountenance the enterprise.

The Druidesses held their influence over the Gauls even when the Druids had disappeared under the Roman emperors. They resided in deep caves, dried-up wells, ravines, woods or other solitary retreats, under the Scandinavian name of *Fanæ*=Fanes (Cf. Swedish *fan*=the devil), or under that of *Faies*, *Faes*, *Fées* English form *fays* and Italian *fate* as seen in an inscription of Diocletian's time, where the singular *fata* is used for *Parca*.

These fays or fairies succeeded to the Druidesses by originally clubbing together as a college of prophetesses. They were believed to be immortal and possessed with supernatural or magical powers. They continued, as their predecessors, to perform their weird ceremonies in secluded woods. They were still very influential under the French dynasty. Under Charles VII they were still extant and believed in, for Joan of Arc during her trial was asked whether she were a fay.

The priests made a clean sweep of them all on the other side of the water, as on this side did their colleagues with the *witches*; in Anglo-Saxon *wiglere*=enchantresses (from *wiglien*=to divine, and *wig*=holy); but again they crop up, *mutato nomine*, as *mediums* in our days.

What remedy was left to the priest, who saw despicable woman thus encroach upon his function and incumbencies? None better than that of contriving to monopolize the prestige she had thus far acquired and rule it over her.

It is a well-known fact that in ancient times the priest had always monopolized all the arts and pursuits that might have interfered with his office whether nigh or afar. There is no doubt that the earliest cook was a priest who gave cooked meat and salt flesh to the cannibals, as Atheneus states in his "*Deipnosophistæ*"; and from presiding over the culinary department, which in time was absorbed into that of sacrifice-offering, he turned his attention to the healing art. There are medicine-men who are priests and diviners in America and Africa; not less so

are there medico-priests in Catholic countries, having medicaments and nostrums which bear the names of monks and saints. Tahova at Tahiti, meaning enlightened, acts both as a priest and medical man; so also the Piages or Pages, at Guarany, in Brazil, follow up both the medical and sacerdotal professions.

Physic appears to have been first practised by the Egyptian priests. According to Ecclesiasticus, the gift of healing comes from God, and kings must have a knowledge of the art of healing (Cf. Isaiah III, 7).

In the Middle Ages, physic had been practised for many years by the clergy, especially by the parabolani, and well celebrated were Constantine, of Carthagenæ, Alphonso Manger, bishop of Winchester, Peter Lombard, Brunero and others.

The Council of Reims (A.D. 1131) prohibited monks from practising the art of healing, but Boniface VIII (A.D. 1292) permitted them.

In all religions diseases and their remedies were ascribed to the gods, whence they have borne their names.

Besides the healing art, the priests took up with all the other arts. With astrology, amongst the Chaldeans and the Assyrians; with poetry and history, as David, Solomon and Moses evince in the Bible; with statecraft, and even with agriculture and the sciences, as seen in the Middle Ages.

More might be said with regard to meteorology, which branch of science was so exclusively belonging to the clergy that till a few years ago it was deemed sacrilegious for a layman to pursue its study.

How could the priests, as a matter of course, not engross the art of magic, or of prophecy also, so common to women, and make it part and parcel of their business? What did they do? In some places they enlisted them in their services, such as the Prophetesses and Pythiæ in Greece; or they contrived to go snags with them by wedlock or by violence, as in the case of the Druids; or they came in for Benjamin's share in the Roman and Etruscan temples.

They at other times and quarters beat them hollow and reduced them to subjection, as with the Fœgians, who still celebrate the freedom of men from the witcheries and control of women.

But still the supremacy of woman kept itself afloat, despite all

the efforts of the priest to outdo her. This supremacy of hers held firm, because based upon her organic conditions, so well acknowledged by both the Gauls and the Germans, who had recognized in her a superior aptitude for prophetic inspiration, in spite of the efforts of her false rival competitor, the priest, to divest her of her ascendancy.

We saw likewise how the Druidesses predominated altogether in the Seine Island; how woman was essentially paramount at Delphi; how she prevailed supremely on the Slave Coast; and how she ruled the roost, as a fay, in mediæval Gaul.

No other course was, therefore, left to the crafty priest but that of commending himself by a cunning artifice. "I am a woman," said he, and as one knows one's man by the cut of his jib, or, better still as *l'abito fa il monaco*—i. e., "it's the cassock that makes the monk"—so he made good his word by betaking himself to the expedient of assuming female garb, which became in time the *toga prætesta*, and later on either the alb or the surplice, thus leaving all the glory of a warrior's wearing-apparel to the laity.

This plan proved in part successful in Ancient Rome. In fact, none but women were once consecrated to the mysteries of the "Good Goddess," and only the vestals performed the religious rites; but the men, who had been excluded, wishing to imitate the mysteries, as Juvenal states, arrayed themselves like women in strict observance of the time-sanctioned rites and rules, even to wearing head-bands and necklaces.

In order to complete the transformation they added tinsel, finery and jewels to their guise, the fashion of wearing the hair, and last, but not least, close shaving—a characteristic feature reproduced by the Catholic clergy.

Being unable to suppress women, "that sex still obnoxious to the priest," they disguised themselves like women; and right they were, for by this means they came off with flying colors; became paramount and lorded it far and wide, extending their supremacy even to magic and prophecy. How is it now that they do not extend it to spiritism and to hypnotism, which, under the broad designation of prophecy, they had long since gained a hold upon, and the acquisition of which cost them so many sacrifices? Why is it, instead, that through the authority of the Vatican and the channel of its organs, they thunder anathema

against spiritism and hypnotism, in which rapid strides and discoveries are daily being made? The reason is obvious; it is because they have not as yet found the way and means of appropriating the phenomena to their functions; and yet the task of monopolizing even these would not be difficult for them. For did they not curse with bell, book and candle against meteorology, because it was infringing upon regions where the Lord reigned supreme; and did they not call curses on the heads of the founders of modern astronomy, such as Copernicus and Galileo? But when they perceived that their denunciations and fulminations, however supported by secular authority, did not tell, it was then that, after whiffing and tacking a bit, they veered at the right time, and became possibly astronomers and meteorologists, all the time protesting and avowing that they had always protected those sciences, which, owing to their positive and mathematical nature, were far away from theology, which was exclusively cultivated by them. So it is that in astronomy many of the clerical body distinguished themselves, and well celebrated are Father Denza, Father Secchi, Father Piazza, Father Francott, Father Drumnon, Father Giovanaza and others. No less than fifteen observatories were founded by them.

So will it turn out likewise with spiritualism, for when mediumistic phenomena shall have gained headway, and this they will surely not be long in doing, then they will justly serve as a basis to a new religion, and the priest, as of yore, will embrace the new revelation and turn it to account as he has always done. Evolution is the law even in priestcraft.

Will the lassies of some new organizer of General Booth's stamp, and such like hysterical revivalists, be the prophetesses of the future? For is there not even nowadays a germ of them in the many camp-meetings of the United States? Cannot the future organizer be the *Pontifex Maximus* of Rome? Be it so, provided the new religion be not as heretofore, "of the letter which killeth, but of the spirit which giveth life"; universal and not sectarian; scientific and not superstitious.

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